

Two Losses, Plus—

By CHARLES W. S. READ

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Miss Nettie Blank and her Aunt Mary had come down to New York city from Connecticut to meet Miss Nettie's brother, who was to arrive on a steamer from Liverpool, but who failed to make an appearance.

A cablegram had reached the house not ten minutes after they left it, but that only deterred the explanation. Aunt Mary had resided in Wisconsin up to a year before, and never having been in the big city, she was anxious to look around a bit. The niece had some shopping to do, and they had put in a couple of days when Aunt Mary called the freshly engaged.

They were visiting a wax-works show in the evening, and the old lady was mightily taken with it. She exclaimed with surprise when a young man in a chamber coat and a flower in his button-hole, and attached himself to her point, and the result was that when the wax-works were to leave the place, Aunt Mary and her niece were left alone.

"Nettie, how can you get the best with the money?"

"Not. You were afraid I lost it, and you took it from me just as we came in."

"Well, it's gone!"

"You don't mean it?"

"But I do. Somebody has got it within the last ten minutes. You may call me an idiot all the rest of my life."

The young man had also departed, and no doubt in company with the bag. Miss Nettie went into a fit of laughter at first, but she soon realized that the loss of the money might prove a very serious matter. To avoid the queries of the other spectators they went outside in the lobby to talk things over. Aunt Mary had noticed the lay figures there on entering and could hardly be convinced that the policeman, footlocker, Uncle Remus and others were not living breathing human beings. She had no eyes and no interest now, however. She had lost \$30 in cash, and there was a hotel bill to pay and the railroad fare home.

"It puts us in a bad predicament," said the girl, because we are stopping at a hotel where they don't know me and two or three of the parcels will be delivered early to-morrow morning. It is just possible that we may find some one from out of town stopping at the hotel and can borrow a few dollars."

"I'll never forgive myself never!" exclaimed Aunt Mary as the tears filled her eyes. "Thinking of a woman of my age having her pocket picked! I shall be ashamed to show them at home. They'll make fun of me to the end of time. Have we got anything we can pawn?"

"No, dear. I was careful not to bring any of my jewelry, and that wax-works and the museum of wax-works around here. I've got a few dollars in my pocket, but that's all."

The old lady had uttered a half shriek and started back from one of the lay figures and was looking at it with bulging eyes.

"—I thought you said they were wax!" she gasped.

"So they are."

"But I'll take my dying oath that one moved a little!"

"Nonsense! You are all worked up about the loss of the money. We shall have to walk back to our hotel and we might as well be moving on."

A week previous to this incident a Yale student named Walter Thompson had added to his demerit marks by taking the train for New York to have a real good time. He had it and awoke one morning to find himself almost penniless and very much ashamed of himself. He had made matters so much worse than they were before that he hated to go back and face the music.

During the day he managed to brace up, but the bracing took the rest of his cash, and he had only a quarter in his pocket when he came to a halt at the corner of Broadway and Fifth avenue, and the women, bound for the wax-works show, passed him.

A young man must be worse than embarrassed financially not to take a second look at a handsome girl passing him on the street. After the student's second look he followed the women, and as it happened to be a half rate evening his quarter bought him a ticket.

He may or may not have been noticed by Miss Nettie as he loitered about with other spectators, but if he was she did not charge him with being the pickpocket who despoiled them. He looked too honest and respectable for that. When he overheard them speaking of their loss he edged toward the door, and once outside he lifted a dim my aside and took his place. At another time—at a time when he was himself—he would have offered his services frankly, but he hadn't the cheek just then. If they had lost their money, he also was without resources.

"But I've got to help them out of their trouble some way," he mused after they had departed from the museum and he had started to follow them at a respectful distance. "Don't go much on old ladies outside of the matter, but that girl is a stunner. It would break my heart if she cried over this trouble. Magnificent hair and glorious eyes! Just the sort of face I've dreamed about. Lots of style and go about her. Broke, and yet I've got to help her."

The ladies were followed to the hotel. As they passed around to the ladies' entrance young Thompson entered by the front and walked up to the desk and inspected the register. He soon found their names; also the name of a citizen from their town who was reputed to be wealthy.

In all probability they would apply to this gentleman for a loan. If not a loan they would at least ask that he telegraph for them. The thought provoked the student. It was for him and no one else to help them out of their trouble.

Noting the number of the man's room, he turned from the desk to the elevator and was landed on the fourth floor. Four doors down the hall was the right door. The student did not ask himself why he was going there, but went. When there was an answer he turned the knob and the door opened. There was no one in the room, but there was evidence that some one had just stepped out in a hurry and might be expected back at any moment.

A smoking chair lay on an ash-tray, and a partly open bag was on the table. One look at the grip and the student had possession of a red leather bag. He did not stop to count the cash, but slipped it out and hurried down the stairs to the street.

He was tapping at the door when Nettie's room and ready to say "hello" as the door was opened.

A second person, Miss Blank, but I was not the wax-works when I met you, and you learned that I was likely to go to the museum you can't deny it. I know your family by name, as perhaps you do mine—the Thompsons—and if I might make so bold as to—

He had the roll of bills in his hand, and the girl instantly divined his good intentions.

"It is kind of you, indeed," she replied, "but we came back to the hotel to find ourselves in great good luck. My Uncle Billy is on the floor above. I had him down here a minute ago to tell him of our loss, and he has come for money for us. There he comes now, the dear old soul!"

"What a thunder and blazes and Texas and several other things do you think has happened?" shouted the old gentleman, while yet a hundred feet away.

"What's the matter, what is it? This is Mr. Thompson. He's people live only a few miles from here."

"I don't care a tinker's dam about the Thompsons or where they live," shouted the irascible uncle. "I've been robbed in this hotel! Yes, sir, I've been robbed of \$30!"

"Why, uncle Billy, is it possible?"

"Some one entered my room and took it out of my satchel while I was down here. Thought I had locked the door, but I guess I didn't. I'm going down to tell the hotel folks that I'll sue them for double the amount."

But he didn't. It was an embarrassing situation for the student, but fortunately he saw that he must tell a straight story to be believed. When he had done so, he looked for his hat and asked for the student's name.

"The name is Walter Thompson, but I don't care for the name. I'll give you a good deal of money if you'll help me out of this predicament."

"What! Are Walter Thompson and Miss Nettie Blank in love?" asked the village gossip.

"In love? Why they're engaged, and Miss Blank's uncle gave them \$500 for an engagement present."

A Lost Play.

Wooden Gressmuth, the English comedian, used to tell a good story about a play by Robert Ganthony, which that gentleman asked him to read. Mr. Gressmuth took the comedy, but lost it on his way home. "Night after night," he says, "I would meet Ganthony, and he would ask me how I liked his play. It was awful. The perspiration used to come out on my forehead as I'd say sometimes, 'I haven't had time to look at it yet' or again. The first act was good, but I can't stop to explain, etc., must catch a train! That play was the bane of my existence and haunted even my dreams." Some months passed, and Ganthony, who is a merry wag, still pursued him without mercy. At last it occurred to Mr. Gressmuth that he might have left the comedy in the cab on the night it was given to him. He went down to Scotland Yard and inquired, "Oh, yes," was the reply. "Play marked with Mr. Ganthony's name sent back to the owner four months ago, as soon as found."

And That Knew Snakes.

That ants can actually kill snakes is a hard thing to believe. There is irrefutable evidence, however, that they do, and scientists have discovered that the snake has hardly a more dangerous enemy. The large red-brown forest ant is the sort that is the most fatal to the ophidians, and a curious thing about the attack of these tiny creatures on this comparatively enormous reptile is that they kill it for food and not on account of any natural antipathy. When some of the ants catch sight of a snake they arouse the whole community at once. In companies and battalions the little fellows set upon the reptile, striking their nippers into his body and eyes at a thousand points at once. So rapidly and concertedly is the done that the snake has no chance at all of escaping. It soon becomes exhausted and dies ignominiously. Then the ants set harder still to work. This may seem a strange story, but it is true. They begin to tear off the flesh in small pieces, gradually stripping off the skin and working inside it.

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ESTATE OF PIERRE T. BETTS, deceased.

Pursuant to the order of George E. Russell, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned, executor of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from prosecuting or recovering the same against the subscriber.

ANNE E. BETTS, EXECUTOR AND MARTIN, PROROC.

August 18, 1906.

ESTATE OF MARTIN GACHERKA, deceased.

Pursuant to the order of George E. Russell, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned, executor of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from prosecuting or recovering the same against the subscriber.

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ODD COURTS MARTIAL

Solemn Farces That Have Been Enacted in the British Navy.

It is a rule in the British navy that when a ship is cast away or otherwise lost a court martial must sit in order to apportion the blame. Sometimes these courts really try and condemn those that are held to be responsible. At other times their duties are, from the very nature of the catastrophe more or less nominal.

The Spanish ship, a court martial as assembled and solemnly "tried" three or four blue-jackets, the sole survivors, although they of course had no more to do with the error in navigation which led up to the catastrophe than the man in the moon.

A similar solemn farce was enacted after the loss of the Captain in the bay of Biscay, when 453 officers and men lost their lives. In this case a junior named James May, one of the eighteen who escaped from the wreck, was the nominal "defendant." The verdict was that the loss of the ship was due to his carelessness in not seeing that the ship was not in the bay.

The court martial was composed of three officers, one of whom was the senior officer. The court was held in the ship's cabin, and the proceedings were conducted in a very formal manner. The court martial was held in the ship's cabin, and the proceedings were conducted in a very formal manner.

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